

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4898

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NY

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0060

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNSC, WA

SUBJ: SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON NAMIBIA

REF: STATE 11009

1. WHILE TACTICS FOR UNSC MEETING ON NAMIBIA MAY OF NECESSITY HAVE TO BE OF DAMAGE-LIMITING NATURE BEST DETERMINED BY DEPT AND USUN, WE DOUBT WHETHER SUPPORT CAN BE WON OR HELD VERY LONG FOR MODERATE RESOLUTION WITHOUT GREATER EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS BY SOUTH AFRICA TOWARD GENUINE SELF-DETERMINATION IN NAMIBIA ITSELF. THIS IN TURN SEEMS UNLIKELY UNLESS SOUTH AFRICA CAN BE ENCOURAGED TO SPEED UP AND MAKE MORE REPRESENTATIVE THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE PROCESS IT HAS ALREADY EMBARKED UPON. INFLUENCING SOUTH AFRICA IN THIS REGARD, HOWEVER, WOULD PROBABLY REQUIRE A RECOMGNITION OF THE PROCESS ALREADY IN MOTION (E.G., SEE AMBASSADOR PIK BOTHA'S COMMENT IN PARA 4 OF USUN 0204), BUT THIS WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO UN MAJORITY. LOOKED AT IN THE UN CONTEXT, THERE MAY BE NO WAY OUT OF THIS VICIOUS CIRCLE. NONETHELESS THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS MAY
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STILL BE RELEVANT IN ASSESSING WHAT LEVERAGE EXISTS ON SOUTH

AFRICAN SIDE OF PROBLEM.

2. SAG REPLY TO TRIPARTITE DEMARCHES ON NAMIBIA INDICATES IT IS CONVINCED THAT CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE IS ONLY WORKABLE APPROACH IN NAMIBIA. WE SERIOUSLY DOUBT, ESPECIALLY IN FACE OF ANGOLA SITUATION, THAT ANY KIND OF RESOLUTION WOULD MOVE THEM TO SCRAP IT OR SUBSTANTIALLY MODIFY ITS FORMAT, BUT THERE MAY BE ROOM FOR PRESSURE TO MAKE IT MORE REPRESENTATIVE AND TO INTRODUCE SOME KIND OF UN PRESENCE. SAG TOOK POSITION THAT IF CONFEREES WERE TO AGREE, IT WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO UN OBSERVER CHOSEN BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT. IF SC COULD CALL ON UNSYG TO EXPLORE WAYS IN WHICH UN PRESENCE MIGHT BE INTRODUCED INTO NAMIBIA, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO EXPLOIT THIS OPENING. DAMARA DELEGATION TO CONFERENCE INTENDS TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL TO GIVE UN OBSERVER STATUS (PRETORIA 0168) AND OTHER DELEGATIONS SEEM WILLING TO SUPPORT IDEA.

3. SAG HAS SEVERAL TIMES SAID POLITICAL GROUPS HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY ROLES IN PROCESS IF THEY WORK WITHIN ESTABLISHED SYSTEM, I.E., PARTICIPATE IN ELECTIONS FOR ETHNIC REPRESENTATION. DAMARA PROPOSAL MENTIONED PARA 3, HOWEVER, ALSO CALLS FOR BROADER REPRESENTATION IN CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE BY POLITICAL GROUPS, AND OTHER DELEGATIONS' LEADERS HAVE SAID BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY THAT THEY DO NOT OPPOSE PARTICIPATION BY POLITICAL PARTIES. THUS, WHILE SAG IS MOST UNLIKELY EVER TO INVITE EXTERNAL SWAPO TO PARTICIPATE IN CONFERENCE, DAMARA PROPOSAL COULD OPEN UP AN AVENUE FOR ACHIEVING MORE REPRESENTATIVE CONFERENCE. WORTH NOTING THAT DEFINITE DIVERGENCE EXISTS BETWEEN INTERNAL WING OF SWAPO AND MORE RADICALLY MILITANT EXTERNAL WING. TO EXTENT INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SEEMS INCREASINGLY TO SUPPORT MILITANT EXTERNAL WING OF SWAPO, SAG POSITION WILL HARDEN, AND INTERNAL SWAPO'S DESIRE FOR MODERATE COURSE WILL BE WEAKENED. WE HAVE REPORTED IN PAST SOME GLIMMERINGS OF INTEREST BY INTERNAL SWAPO LEADERS AND BY MEMBERS OF NAMIBIA NATIONAL CONVENTION TO FIND MEANS OF COMPROMISE THAT WOULD ALLOW THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN CONFERENCE.

4. ANGOLAN DEVELOPMENTS SERIOUSLY AFFECT QUESTION OF NAMIBIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT BY HARDENING ATTITUDES BOTH OF

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SOUTH AFRICA'S OPPONENTS IN UN AND OF SAG ITSELF. DILEMMA OF CURRENT SITUATION IS THAT PRESENT CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE MAY OFFER ONLY PATH BY WHICH SAG CAN BE PERSUADED PEACEFULLY TO MOVE TOWARD MORE GENUINE SELF-DETERMINATION, YET SOUTH AFRICAN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA MAY HAVE MADE IT IMPRACTICAL TO EXPECT ANY UN PATIENCE WITH THE CONFERENCE PROCESS, AND SAG APPREHENSION ABOUT THE KIND OF REGIME THAT WILL EVENTUALLY BE ESTABLISHED IN ANGOLA MAY MAKE IT ALL THE MORE RELUCTANT TO

FURTHER DEMOCRATIZE OR SPEED UP THE PROCESS.
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